

things has come into vogue. . . . which marks a definite turning-point from what has been to what is to come." "It is a period of doubt; what it will result in remains to be seen." The Christian ministry, and the friends of a supernatural faith and a true morality, are bound to weigh such words coming from such a source, and to let their voice be heard. "Fiction" is a tremendous factor in forming character, in developing society, in creating sentiment; and if it be given over to "Agnosticism," a dark future is before us.

**THE PULPIT: ITS PROVINCE AND ITS POWER.**  
By John M. Titzel, D.D. *Reformed Quarterly Review*, (Jan.) 12 pp. What is the true province of the pulpit? Is it really the case that the power of the pulpit is waning? are the points considered in this paper. Passing in review Freeman's Essay prefatory to his volume "The Secular Gospel," he argues clearly and forcibly to show that the province of the pulpit is not to teach philosophy or science or art or politics as such, but to proclaim to men Christ as the only Saviour, and to persuade them to accept Him as such by faithfully expounding God's

word as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments, and by bearing personal testimony to His power to save. And in thus preaching Christ, consists the true power and glory of the pulpit. The most powerful and successful preachers in every period of the Church and in every land, have ever been those who confined themselves most closely in their pulpit ministrations to the exposition of the Scriptures as bearing witness of Christ as the only hope of a perishing world. To the second question the writer gives a negative answer. But the evidence he gives in support of it, to our mind, far from being conclusive. The chief is the outward growth of the Church and the extension of the kingdom of God. But this is a superficial view. Many factors besides the power of the pulpit enter into this. No candid mind who takes a broad observation of things, can come to any other rational conclusion than that the province of the actual Christian pulpit of our times is greatly restricted, and that it does not wield that majestic and commanding power over men and over society which it did in a former generation.

#### GERMS OF ILLUSTRATION.

*Unknown things and words can be illustrated and explained only by known things and words.*—N. A. CALKINS.

**One can often help another do what one cannot do himself.** The cobbler could not paint the picture, but he could tell Apelles that the *shoe-tie* was not quite right.

**At the "driving of the last spike"** in the Northern Pacific Railroad, one of the most interesting and suggestive incidents was, that the telegraph wires were so connected with the *spike* and the *hammer* that every blow of the hammer was indicated both at St. Paul and at New York City.

**Old Montana herdsmen tell us that** if the cattle on the plains and mountains are left to shift for themselves, however deep the snow, they will generally find enough food to sustain them. But if a ranchman once begins to feed them when the snow is deep, he must feed them till the snow is all gone. They will cease all effort to find food for themselves, and starve to death in their tracks.

**The United States government is** now constructing a canal around the Cascades of the Columbia River, something like the Welland Canal, around Niagara Falls, by which the navigation of that stream will be extended many hundred miles. The principles of lockage on canals are familiar to many of our readers, but the lifting of a boat from a lower level or strait to a higher one is very interesting and suggestive. The boat is floated into a lock on the lower level, and the gates are closed behind it. Then a sluice-way is opened in the upper gates, through which the water from the higher level passes into the lock, and lifts the boat to a level of the water above. When the

water in lock rises to a level with the water on the higher strait, the pressure now removed, the upper gates open easily, and the boat floats out into the water of the higher level. A novice standing by after the first gust of water at the opening of the sluice-way, would scarcely know what was going on, it proceeds so noiselessly. The boat in the lock continues to rise, and when it reaches the higher level, the upper gates open without difficulty, and the boat floats out so easily!

**The last words of the late Dr. John** Howard Raymond, President of Vassar College, spoken in broken utterance, were: "How easy—how easy—how easy to glide from work here to the work——" *There*, he evidently wished to add, but his voice failed him!

**Why Governor Briggs, of Massa-**chusetts, never wore a collar.—Hon. George N. Briggs, so long Governor of Massachusetts, was a man of fine personal appearance, exceedingly neat in his apparel; but all who ever saw him must have noticed that he never wore a shirt collar. The reason for this was, as he himself tells it, as follows: When a young man, he worked in a hat factory. Most of his associates were given to drink. There was one young man in whom he took great interest, and to whom he had often spoken, trying to dissuade him from his bad ways. This man one day turned upon him with great vehemence and bitterness, saying: "I don't want you to preach to me, Briggs; you have your faults as well as I. You don't drink, but you are as proud as a peacock. When you have